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And the cold sobbing wind bestrews his path
With wither'd leaves, that rustle 'neath his tread ;
And round him still, in melancholy state,
Sweet solemn thoughts of death and of decay,
In slow and hush'd attendance, ever wait,
Telling how all things fair must pass away."

ART. VII.—*Dunlap's History of the Arts.*

History of the Rise and Progress of the Arts of Design in the United States. By WILLIAM DUNLAP, Vice President of the National Academy of Design, Author of the History of the American Theatre, Biography of G. F. Cooke, &c. 2 vols. 8vo. New York. 1834.

WE have read this book throughout with great, though equally sustained interest. Mr. Dunlap has brought together in it a great variety of curious information about artists and the arts in the United States. The author's own life has been given, in a great measure, to the study and practice of painting, both at home and abroad ; and though he has never reached a high eminence in that art, yet his familiarity with practical details, and his extensive acquaintance with living artists, would seem to give him peculiar qualifications for the task he has undertaken. This task we think Mr. Dunlap has, on the whole, ably and laboriously fulfilled. Every source from which knowledge could be drawn, has been resorted to, and an extraordinary collection of materials, to illustrate the progress of the arts, in and out of the United States, has been gathered with untiring industry, and amazing minuteness of research. Printed and manuscript biographies, public and private documents, the testimony of living artists, and notes and memoranda of the dead, pour their treasures into this reservoir. The number of names which Mr. Dunlap has made the public acquainted with, would make the stoutest defenders of the superiority of American genius stare with wonder, and ought to make the cavillers hang their heads with shame. These names include the professors of all the arts of design, both those who had talents and those who had not ; but we feel bound to say,

that the latter class outnumbers the former by a great majority, *counting per capita*.

Mr. Dunlap has relieved the body of his work by interspersing brief essays on the several arts, some of which are from his own pen, and some written by others practically engaged in the profession. In this way a great amount of information on the technical terms and manual processes of art, is brought within the reader's reach. This information, though not commonly possessed, is quite necessary to the right understanding of criticisms on the works brought into discussion. We think Mr. Dunlap has done wisely to give his readers this benefit, and hope it will prove a benefit to the sale of the book.

Some of the most interesting portions of the work are the auto-biographical letters of living artists, published wholly or in part. Mr. Alexander's sketch of his early life, is one of the most entertaining histories of genius, struggling to find its true position, that we have ever read. Mr. Allston's notices of contemporary artists, are fine specimens of good humor, and excellent criticism. The same remark may be applied to many others.

Mr. Dunlap's narrative style is easy and clear, though sometimes wanting in strength. There is, also, a want of arrangement, selection and compression; circumstances of little or no importance, are often related with as much gravity as those of the highest. The spirit of Mr. Dunlap's criticism, though not searching and profound, is, in general, full of good sense and candor. He praises heartily, and blames independently. He loves and respects the arts, and delights to honor those whose genius in the arts has made them illustrious. But we have some fault to find with him. He has been too free in showing up the private histories of artists, and blazoning abroad circumstances in their domestic or personal relations, which ought to have been held forever sacred from the public gaze. A man no more forfeits his individual rights by becoming a painter or sculptor, than he does by becoming a shoe-maker or house-carpenter, — and that great busy-body, the public, has as good a claim to pry into and violate the sanctity of domestic life, in one case, as in the other. He has taken up too many pages with the unimportant or merely local quarrels of artists, and sometimes shews a strength of personal feeling that must lessen his credit as an impartial historian. The wearisome attacks on Colonel Trumbull are marked by a harshness

of temper which a sensible man ought to keep under the control of his better nature. Many stories are told, in this and other portions of the work, — the life of Stuart, for instance, — which are probably no more than idle gossip ; but being thus furnished with a local habitation in authentic history, may be of serious injury to the fame of those about whom they are related. Scandalous chronicles need more sifting to come at the truth than the records of virtuous deeds, a discreditable story being commonly more readily believed, and more easily invented, than the opposite one. It is a safe rule to believe all the good a man has credit for, *at once*, and disbelieve all the evil laid to his charge, save on the strictest proof. Take the *word* of him who speaks his neighbor's praise, but hold the tale-bearer to the *law* and the *testimony*.

We propose to give a few pages to some notices of the state of American art. The rank which our countrymen have taken in this department, within the last fifty or sixty years, renders this an interesting and important theme. Undoubtedly many of the master productions of this age have sprung from the genius of America. Men are ever and anon starting up, in the bosom of our happy land, whom God has gifted with the seeing eye and the cunning hand ; before whom nature out-spreads her beauties, and is understood ; over whose souls the mighty mother breathes her inspiration, and they heave with the emotions of creative genius struggling on blindly, until some happy accident, some unforeseen event, leads them into their destined path, and a thousand forms of beauty, grace, and grandeur, descend to them and gather round them, to glow on the canvass, to live in the marble. Our greatest want is the want of models, which time and patience will supply. An open career, unbounded freedom of personal action, are the birthright of every American artist. The spreading intercourse of this country with others, the ever-growing sum total of native productions, are fast filling our public collections and our private abodes. Public and private prosperity are increasing, and the humanizing arts are following in their train.

The first artist commemorated by our author, was John Watson, a Scotchman, who came to the United States in 1715. This gentleman appears to have been a great oddity. His works made the children stare, and might reasonably have made grown people stare, too. He had some taste for picture-making, but more for money-making. He had a bad eye for

the picturesque, but an excellent one for the main chance. He often missed a likeness, but never a safe investment. His works are never spoken of, and even his name is unknown beyond the circle of Mr. Dunlap's readers.

Smybert, the next in order, is chiefly remarkable for the influence he exercised over the minds of abler artists than himself, Copley, Trumbull, and Allston. His most interesting works are the copy of Vandyke's Bentivoglio in Harvard library, and a picture of Bishop Berkeley's family, now in the possession of Yale college. He had joined in the visionary schemes of this enthusiastic philanthropist and scholar. The main object of the enterprize failed, but its failure was more fortunate for the artist than success would probably have been, for it led him to Boston, matrimony, and competence.

After noticing slightly several other and more obscure artists, our author takes up the life of Benjamin West. West had the singular fortune of reading the greater part of his biography, in the ample volume of Galt. But though this circumstance might reasonably be expected to give additional weight to the narrative, it must be confessed that Galt's love of fiction, or habit of writing fiction, has strangely adorned the simple history of the Quaker painter. As an artist, West's fame has perhaps already passed its zenith; and in this respect, he will probably stand lower in the opinion of posterity, than the love and admiration of his cotemporaries will allow. But his history will offer to all coming ages, a beautiful example of a virtuous and honorable man. True his character has been exposed to the sneer, and his genius to the mockery of the foul-mouthed author of Peter Pindar; but what exalted and illustrious worth was sacred from his attacks? what purity of virtue was not assailed, — what decency of social life was not violated by that "obscene bird" of song? West's talents were unquestionably great, but his industry was greater. His temper was placid, his habits frugal, his manners gentle. He had gathered up treasures of knowledge, which he dispensed to the young with unsparing bounty. Information and advice were never sought from him in vain, by the youthful beginner in the career of art. Exposed to the temptation of a dangerous metropolis, he passed through a long life without a stain. The attractions of fashionable dissipation, so fatal to the irregular sensibilities of most men of genius, were opened in vain before the undisturbed serenity of his mind.

He toiled on, amidst them all, with a steadiness of purpose, a calmness of self-possession, a coolness of judgment, an evenness of temper, a staid sobriety of feeling, that made the results of his efforts, both in the services he rendered to his studious young countrymen, and in the number and extent of his works, truly amazing.

Mr. Dunlap gives the following account of a well known incident, in the painter's life.

"At the age of twenty-one, Benjamin West embarked with young Allen, and soon arrived at Gibraltar, where the ship stopped for convoy. Captain Kearny, commanding the ships of war on the station, was a friend of young Allen's father, and the young man, with his companion, being invited to dine on board his ship, West was introduced favorably to the officers, with whom he proceeded up the Mediterranean. Messrs. Rutherford and Jackson were the correspondents of Mr. Allen, and the young painter, having delivered his credentials to them at Leghorn, was furnished with letters to Cardinal Albani and other distinguished characters at Rome. Under these favorable auspices the quaker painter proceeded on his journey in charge of a French courier, who had been engaged by his Leghorn friends as his guide and interpreter, and gained his first view of the immortal city from a height at eight miles distance. It is easy to imagine the impression such a prospect, and its attendant anticipations, would make upon an American youth of that day, and it is much safer to leave the subject to the imagination of the reader than to obtrude upon him the surmises of the writer. Suffice it to say, that the unsophisticated Yankee arrived safe at the great metropolis, and was introduced to the remains of her ancient taste and splendor, scarcely more the object of his admiration, than he was of attention to the nobles of Italy, and the illustrious strangers with whom the city swarmed. An American had come to study painting, and that American a quaker! This was a matter of astonishment, and when it was found that the young man was neither black nor savage, but fair, intelligent, and already a painter, West became emphatically the lion of the day in Rome.

"It was on the 10th of July, 1760, that the French courier deposited the youth at an hotel in the great city, and spread the strange story abroad that a quaker and an American had come to study the fine arts in Italy; this appeared so extraordinary to an English gentleman, Mr. Robinson, that he immediately sought him, and insisted on his dining with him. The letters brought by West proved to be from Mr. Robinson's friends, and the artist had the advantage of an immediate introduction to the best society of Rome.

"At the house of Mr. Crespigny he was presented to Cardinal Albani, who, although blind, 'had acquired, by the exquisite delicacy of his touch, and the combining powers of his mind,' we quote Mr. Galt, 'such a sense of ancient beauty, that he excelled all the virtuoso of Rome in the correctness of his knowledge of the variety and peculiarities of the smallest medals and intaglios.' To this virtuoso Mr. Robinson introduced the quaker as 'a young American, who had come to Italy for the purpose of studying the fine arts;' and the query of the cardinal was, 'Is he black or white?'

"West, among the many advantages derived from nature, possessed a fine form, and a face as fair as artists paint angels, or lovers their mistresses. At the age of fifty he was remarkable for comeliness; and it is presumed that at the period of which we treat, his appearance must have been very prepossessing, and not the less for the flowing locks and simple attire of his sect. The cardinal being satisfied that the painter was as white *as himself*, (that being his next inquiry,) received him graciously, examined his face and head, with his fingers, expressed his admiration, and made up a party to witness the impression which the sight of the chef d'œuvres of antiquity, would make upon a native of the new world. The Apollo was first shown him, and his exclamation was, 'How like a young Mohawk warrior!'

"The Italians, on hearing the words translated by Mr. Robinson, were mortified, but when West, at that gentleman's request, described the Mohawk in his state of native freedom, as seen in those days, his speed, his vigor, his exercise with the bow,—when Mr. Robinson interpreted the words, 'I have seen a Mohawk standing in that very attitude, intensely pursuing with his eye the flight of the arrow just discharged from the bow,' his auditory were delighted by the criticism of the stranger, and applauded his untutored acumen."

The following extract contains an interesting summary of Mr. West's travels in Italy.

"It is related by Mr. Galt that West's first specimen of painting in Europe, a portrait of Mr. Robinson, was said to be better colored than the works of Mengs, at that time the greatest painter in Rome, and that the young American was pronounced the second in rank in that capital. This assertion does not accord with the fact that few of West's pictures previous to that time appear to have merited preservation. Many of Copley's works painted before he left his country are yet to be seen and admired. We have been obliged to search diligently for any specimen of West's portrait painting before he left America, and when we have found it, it has hardly been worth the search. This, however, we can

say, that we have found none better among the works of his predecessors. They are not such as we should expect would rival Mengs in coloring or anything else; we have previously mentioned those of Mr. Bard and Mr. Morris, and we may not have seen the best he painted at that early period. On the other hand, we know that West during the four years he passed in Italy, painted pictures which gained him academical honors, and the applause of the public; we know that his copy of Corregio's St. Jerome, executed at Parma, is a perfect specimen of coloring; and we know that on his arrival in England he took his stand immediately as the first historical painter in the kingdom.

“Mengs and Pompeo Battoni were at this period the greatest painters of Rome. Of the latter, in connection with our subject, we have been favored with the following from Mr. Allston, as related to him by Mr. West. ‘Battoni was at that time ‘in full flower,’ dividing the empire of art with Mengs. He received Mr. West very graciously in his painting room, and after some questions respecting his country, concerning which he seemed to have had no very distinct notion,—said, ‘And so, young man, you have come—how far is it?’ ‘Three thousand miles.’ ‘Ay, three thousand miles from the woods of America to become a painter! You are very fortunate in coming to Rome at this time, for now you shall see Battoni paint.’ He thereupon proceeded with his work then in hand, a picture of the Madonna; occasionally exclaiming, as he stept back, to see the effect, ‘e viva Battoni!’

“Mengs very liberally applauded the effort of the young artist, which had been compared to his own masterly productions, and traced out a plan for his studies and travel. ‘See and examine everything deserving of your attention here, and after making a few drawings of about half a dozen of the best statues, go to Florence, and observe what has been done for art in the collections there. Then proceed to Bologna, and study the works of the Caracci; afterwards visit Parma, and examine attentively the pictures of Corregio; and then go to Venice, and view the productions of Tintoretto, Titian, and Paul Veronese. When you have made this tour, come back to Rome, and paint an historical composition to be exhibited to the Roman public.’

“The excitements of Rome produced fever, and before West could avail himself of this judicious advice, his friends and physicians advised a return to Leghorn for the restoration of health. Here he was received into the hospitable mansion of Messrs. Rutherford and Jackson, and by their care, recovered so far as to return to his studies in Rome, but was soon again forced by a relapse to fly once more to Leghorn, when the fever left him with an affection of the ankle, which threatened the loss of the limb:

His constant friends Jackson and Rutherford sent him to Florence, and placed him under the care of a celebrated surgeon, who produced a radical cure, after a confinement of eleven months.

“Even during this season of pain and disease, the artist pursued his studies, and was encouraged by the attentions of men of taste and influence, both natives and travellers. When recovered so as to bear the fatigues of travelling, he had the good fortune to obtain as a companion on the tour recommended by Mengs, a man of extraordinary accomplishments and acquirements. A gentleman of the name of Matthews, connected with Messrs. Rutherford and Jackson, visited Florence and agreed to accompany the young painter in his visit to the most celebrated repositories of Italian art.

“In the mean time, that good fortune which attended West's conduct throughout life, was operating in his favor on the shores of the western world. The applause bestowed on the portrait of Mr. Robinson, was mentioned in a letter from Rutherford and Jackson to Mr. Allen, of Philadelphia, and the letter read by him to an assemblage of gentlemen at his dinner table, among whom was Governor Hamilton. Allen mentioned the sum deposited with him, by West before his departure, adding, ‘as it must be much reduced, he shall not be frustrated in his studies for want of money: I will write to my correspondents to furnish him with whatever he may require.’ This generous declaration produced a demand from the Governor, that ‘he should be considered as joining in the responsibility of the credit.’ The consequence was, that while West was waiting at Florence for the sum of ten pounds for which he had written to his friends at Leghorn, he received notice from their bankers that they were instructed to give him unlimited credit.

“It is not always that talents, when backed by good conduct, produce such effects upon mankind; and some may perhaps exclaim, ‘surely mankind are less inclined to obey the generous impulses of nature now, than they were a century ago.’ But it is not so. Talents ever command admiration, and good conduct solicits good will. But both or either may be obscured by circumstances. They may exist separately, and not be deserving of friendship. They may be united, and their efforts destroyed by personal defect in the possessor, timidity, false shame, false pride or excessive sensitiveness,—and as far as these defects have influence, the effects of good conduct are weakened, obscured or destroyed. West had talents, virtue, youth, beauty, and prudence. He appears to have possessed no quality to counteract their influence, and circumstances independent of his own good qualities seemed uniformly to favor his progress.

"From Florence Mr. West proceeded to Bologna, and after inspecting the works of art, he went on to Venice. Here the style and coloring of Titian were his principal study. After completing the tour recommended by Mengs, he returned to Rome, and pursued his study again in that great centre of taste. He at this time painted his pictures of Cimon and Iphigenia, and Angelica and Medora. These established his reputation as an historical painter, and obtained him the academical honors of Rome.

"By the advice of his father he determined to visit England before returning home, and again he had the advantage of travelling with a man of taste and refinement, Dr. Patoune, who was returning to Great Britain. The doctor proceeded to Florence, while the painter went to take leave of his friends at Leghorn. The travellers afterwards stopped at Parma, while West finished his copy of St. Jerome. This beautiful picture is in the possession of the family of Mr. Allen, one of the painter's earliest friends, and in America. Here again the novelty of an American quaker painter procured him the attention of the great; and the *friend* kept on his broad brim when introduced to the court of Parma, very much to the astonishment of the prince and his courtiers, — perhaps not a little to their amusement.

"Genoa and Turin were taken in the route to France, and the peace of 1763 having been but lately concluded, the travellers as Englishmen, were only protected by a magistrate from a mob, who had not yet ratified the treaty. In Paris, West visited, as every where else, the collections of paintings and sculptures, but the inferiority of France to Italy was at that time more apparent than at this, and the American had little to learn in Paris, who had studied in, and gained the approbation of the academies of Italy."

The following able review of Mr. West's character is from the pen of Sir Martin Archer Shee, the President of the Royal Academy.

"The discourses of President West bear ample testimony to the zeal and knowledge which he brought to the performance of a task, rendered as arduous as it was honorable, by the extraordinary ability with which it had been previously executed.

"Well grounded in the elementary principles of this profession, he was as conversant with the theory, as he was dexterous in the practice of his art. It is no exaggeration to say of him, that in the exercise of those powers of the pencil, to the attainment of which his ambition more particularly directed him, he was unrivalled in his day. Such, indeed, was the facility of his hand, and with so much certainty did he proceed in his operations, that

he rarely failed to achieve whatever he proposed to accomplish, and within the time which he had allotted for its performance.

"Indefatigable application and irrepressible ardor in his pursuit, succeeded in obtaining for him that general knowledge of his subject, which seldom fails to reward the toils of resolute and well-directed study. No artist of his time, perhaps, was better acquainted with the powers and the expedients, the exigencies and the resources of his art. No man could more sagaciously estimate the qualities of a fine picture, or more skilfully analyze the merits combined in its production. If you found yourself embarrassed in the conduct of your work, and you consulted him, he would at once show you where it failed, and why it failed. Like a skilful physician, he announced with precision the nature of the disease, and could suggest the remedy, even where he was not himself qualified to administer it.

"The qualities which distinguished him, both as a man and as an artist, were, perhaps, not a little influenced by the peculiar religious impressions which he had early received. Order, calmness, and regularity characterized him through all the relations of life. In his habits of investigation, there was nothing loose, desultory, or digressive. The stores of knowledge which study and experience enabled him to lay up, were immediately classed and ticketed for use; and the results of his observations he diligently endeavored to compress into principles, whenever they would admit of so advantageous a reduction; the natural turn of his mind leading him to repress, within the strict limits of system and science, the arbitrary, irregular, and eccentric movements of genius and taste.

"No man could be more liberally desirous than West to impart to others the knowledge which he possessed. He never, indeed, appeared to be more gratified than when engaged in enlightening the minds of those who looked up to him for instruction; and though, in following the path of precept marked out by his great predecessor, and communicating the lessons of his experience in a similar way, he does not approach to a rivalry with Reynolds as a teacher of his art; though his pen was not so ready as his pencil, and cannot be said to display the graces of language and style which distinguish the compositions of that eminent writer, yet the discourses of President West, delivered from this place, must be acknowledged to contain many ingenious remarks and much useful information. They evince an ardent enthusiasm for the honor and interests of his profession, and a laudable zeal to recommend the just claims of the arts to the respect and protection of our country.

"It is impossible to review the character and professional powers of this able artist, without the strongest sense of regret that

they are so inadequately understood and appreciated in this country, even at this day. The spirit of criticism prevalent among us, which, it must be confessed, is not generally too indulgent to the imperfections of modern art, has shown itself, in his case, more than usually fastidious and severe. The high aims of his pencil, which might reasonably be expected to propitiate the community of taste, have procured for him no favor. He is unsparingly censured when he fails, and is allowed little credit where he has succeeded. He is tried, not by his merits, but by his defects, and judged by a tribunal which admits only the evidence against him. His profession, indeed, have always done him justice; and they manifested their sense of his claims by the station in which they placed him. But few artists have been less favored by fortune, or more ungenerously defrauded of their fame. It has been unreservedly stated on his own authority, that the remuneration of his labors, from the patronage of *the public*, during the space of forty-five years, was so inadequate to his very moderate wants, as to leave him dependent on the income allowed him as historical painter to his royal patron George the Third, for the means of living in this country.

"It is melancholy to reflect, that in consequence of this resource having been unexpectedly withdrawn from him, very late in life, and at a period when his royal protector must have been unconscious of such a proceeding, the close of his long and laborious career was embittered by pecuniary embarrassment. But his enthusiasm for his art never for a moment failed under his disappointments. The spring of his mind never once gave way, and nearly to the latest hour of an existence prolonged beyond the period usually assigned to the age of man, he was occupied in projecting works sufficiently extensive to startle the enterprize of youth, and demand the exertion of the most vigorous manhood.

"Unfortunately, however, West did not possess, in a sufficient degree, those qualities of art which are the most popular amongst us. The captivations of color, *chiar' oscuro*, and execution, which the English school displays in such perfection, were wanting to set off his productions; and the merits of a higher order which they contained, appealed to, and required the exercise of a better informed and more comprehensive judgment than the taste of his time could in general supply.

"So little impression, indeed, had his various powers left upon the public mind, after the toils of more than half a century, that a collection of his pictures, formed after his death by his family, containing many of his finest works, and arranged with peculiar judgment and taste, had scarcely sufficient attraction for the admirers of art in this great metropolis, to defray the expenses attending their exhibition.

"The defects of West were obvious to the most common observer of his works. Every small critic could talk of the hardness of his outline, the dryness of his manner, and the absence of what may be called those *surface sweets* which are so highly prized, under the name of execution, by that class of artists and connoisseurs who think more of the means than of the end, in contemplating a work of art. But it demanded greater knowledge of the subject than is commonly found amongst the ordinary dispensers of fame in this country, to appreciate his various acquirements; — his powers of composition; — his general facility of design; — his masterly treatment of extensive subjects, where, in pouring a population on his canvass, the resources of an artist's imagination are put to the test; — the scientific construction and arrangement of his groupes, and the appropriate action and occupation of the different figures of which they are composed. Yet all these are qualities which rank high in the scale by which it is usual to estimate the comparative claims of a painter. We must take care not to lose sight of the standard by which the relative merits of our art are to be measured. In proportion as the intellectual is combined with the mechanical, do we value those productions of man which are not appropriated to the purposes of manufacture, or the ordinary accommodations of life.

"Invention, composition, design, character, and expression have always taken precedence of coloring, *chiar' oscuro*, and execution, in the estimation of the judicious critic; though excellence in the latter qualities may be justly preferred to mediocrity in the former. We may, from local prejudice, or personal peculiarity, prefer silver to gold, or a pebble to a diamond; but if we reverse in our notions the relative value, which, by common consent, has been assigned to these objects, our judgment will be considered not only erroneous but diseased.

"The ambition of West directed him to the highest department of his art. In his hands the pencil was always employed for the noblest purposes, — on subjects the moral interest of which outweighs their mechanical execution. He delighted to commemorate heroic deeds, to illustrate the annals of sacred history, and perpetuate the triumphs of patriotism and public virtue.

"If we applaud the exalted spirit which prompted him to devote his talents to such praiseworthy objects, shall we not also offer the just tribute of our admiration to the enlightened monarch who encouraged and sustained his labors; who, by liberally endeavoring to re-open the church to the arts, sought to procure for them a new source of employment in this country, and who, as far as in him lay, set an example of generous patronage of the arts to the great and powerful of his day, which, if it had been followed with corresponding zeal and patriotism, could not have failed to obtain

for Great Britain all the glory which pre-eminence in arts can shed upon a state?

“ The degree of success with which the honorable exertions of West were attended, may, I conceive, be fairly determined by this test: let the most prejudiced of those who are inclined to question his claims to the rank of a great artist examine the series of prints engraved from his works. I would, in particular, entreat them to view with some attention, the Death of General Wolfe,—the battle of La Hogue and the Boyne,—the Return of Regulus to Carthage,—Agrippina bearing the ashes of Germanicus,—the young Hannibal swearing eternal enmity to the Romans,—the Death of Epaminondas,—the Death of the Chevalier Bayard,—Pyrrhus, when a boy, brought to Glaucus, king of Illyria, for protection,—and Penn's treaty with the Indians; not to mention many others, perhaps equally deserving of enumeration. Let these well-known examples of his ability be candidly considered, and where is the artist, whose mind is enlarged beyond the narrow sphere of his own peculiar practice,—where is the connoisseur, whose taste has not been formed by a *catalogue raisonné*, or in the atmosphere of an auction-room,—who will hesitate to acknowledge that the author of such noble compositions may justly claim a higher station in his profession than has been hitherto assigned to him, and well merits to be considered, in his peculiar department, the most distinguished artist of the age in which he lived?”

The next artist commemorated in these memoirs, is John Singleton Copley. He was born in Boston, in 1738, and began to show the turn of his genius for painting early in life. In 1774 he went to Italy, and two years after, arrived in England, where he devoted himself to portraiture, and became a member of the Royal Academy. Besides his portraits, many historical pieces from his pencil have gained considerable celebrity,—among them are, “ the Death of Chatham,” and “ Charles the First in the house of Commons.” The name of Copley has been made still more illustrious, by the genius of the painter's son, Lord Lyndhurst, who has twice been raised to the dignity of Lord High Chancellor of England. The following remarks on Copley are from the letters of C. R. Leslie, addressed to Mr. Dunlap.

“ ‘ Of Copley I can tell you very little. I saw him once in Mr. West's gallery, but he died very soon after my arrival in London. Mr. West told me he was the most tedious of all painters. When painting a portrait, he used to match with his palette-knife a tint

for every part of the face, whether in light, shadow, or reflection. This occupied himself and the sitter a long time before he touched the canvas. One of the most beautiful of his portrait compositions is at Windsor Castle, and represents a group of the royal children playing in a garden with dogs and parrots. It was painted at Windsor, and during the operation, the children, the dogs, and the parrots became equally wearied. The persons who were obliged to attend them while sitting complained to the queen; the queen complained to the king; and the king complained to Mr. West, who had obtained the commission for Copley. Mr. West satisfied his majesty that Copley must be allowed to proceed in his own way, and that any attempt to hurry him might be injurious to the picture, which would be a very fine one when done.'

"The prediction of West was fully accomplished; and this graceful, splendid, and beautiful composition was seen by the writer at Somerset House, in the year 1786 or '7, and is remembered with pleasure to this day.

"On the subject of Copley, we must give our readers some further valuable and entertaining matter from the pen of Mr. Leslie. He says:

"As you ask my opinion of Copley, you shall have it, such as it is. His merits and defects resemble those of West. I know not that he was ever a regular pupil of the president, but he was certainly of his school. Correct in drawing, with a fine manner of composition, and a true eye for light and shadow, he was defective in coloring. With him it wants brilliancy and transparency. His Death of Major Pierson, I think his finest historical work,—you have perhaps seen it,—at any rate you know the fine engraving of it, by James Heath. Copley's largest picture is in Guildhall; the destruction of the floating batteries off Gibraltar, by General Elliot. The foreground figures are as large as life, but those in the middle distance, are either too small or deficient in aerial perspective. Instead of looking like men diminished by distance, they look less than life. With the exception of this defect the picture is a fine one. His Death of Lord Chatham is now in the National Gallery. It is the best colored picture I have seen by him, but it has a defect frequent in large compositions made up of a number of portraits. There are too many *figures to let*. Too many unoccupied, and merely introduced to show the faces. His picture of Brooke Watson and the Shark, is in the large hall of the Blue Coat School. It is a good picture, but dry and bad in color. He painted, I believe, a great many portraits, but I have seen none of any consequence excepting the group of the King's Children I described to you in my last. It is a beautiful picture. I have heard Allston say, he has seen very fine

portraits, painted by Copley before he left America. I would advise you to write to Allston about it.' In another of Mr. Leslie's valuable letters we have the following:—' I know not if Allan Cunningham in his life of Copley, has told the following story of his tediousness as a painter. It is said, a gentleman employed him to paint his family in one large picture, but during its progress, the gentleman's wife died, and he married again. Copley was now obliged to obliterate all that was painted of the first wife, and place her in the clouds in the character of an angel, while her successor occupied her place on earth. But lo! she died also, and the picture proceeded so slowly as to allow the husband time enough to console himself with a third wife. When the picture was completed, therefore, the gentleman had two wives in heaven, and one on earth, with a sufficient quantity of children. The price, which was proportioned to the labor bestowed on the picture, was disputed by the employer, who alleged that the picture ought to have been completed before his domestic changes had rendered the alterations and additions necessary. Copley went to law with him; and his son, (now Lord Lyndhurst,) who was just admitted to the bar, gained his father's cause. The story was told me by a gentleman, who was old enough to remember Copley, but he did not give me his authority for it, and I fear it is too good to be true.* I remember one or two of Copley's last pictures in the exhibition, but they were very poor; he had outlived his powers as an artist.'"

This country has produced no portrait painter of more commanding excellence, than Gilbert Stuart. He was a man of great impetuosity and lively sensibility. His discernment was acute, and his judgment unerring. He saw the character of his sitters at a glance, and gave them to the canvas with amazing truth. He did not merely imitate the face,—*map* it, as some one has well expressed the thought,—but he unlocked the secret within, and drew the portrait of the mind itself. He painted the outward lineaments with striking truth; but in a higher spirit of truth, he strove to give the *thinking being*. A curious anecdote is told, to illustrate this trait of Stuart's genius. Lord Mulgrave engaged Mr. Stuart to paint a portrait of his brother, General Phipps, then on the point of sailing to India. Something strange in the picture struck his lordship's eye, and drew from him the exclamation, "I see insanity in that face!" The first news of General Phipps, after his arrival, was that

"*Cunningham tells this story with such variations as such stories are liable to; the reader has seen it, and will judge which is best."

he had gone mad, and cut his throat! This may have been an accidental coincidence; but it is most likely that the painter saw some slight peculiarity of mind, symptomatic of insanity, and that it unconsciously affected his conception of the whole character. Stuart's portraits have thus, very naturally, taken rank with the foremost productions in that branch of art.

Stuart's talent in conversation is said to have been extraordinary. His wit was copious and ready, his knowledge various, and he appears to have had, in an eminent degree, the art of making every sitter talk in his own peculiar vein. Every body has heard of the awkward feelings experienced by people who are suffering the operation of having their pictures taken. The painter who has not tact enough to remove these amiable weaknesses, will stand a poor chance of giving a happy likeness. A majority of the portraits in the world, express the feelings of bashful men, under a painful consciousness of being dressed up, and standing point blank before a row of ladies in a drawing-room. But Mr. Stuart's portraits differ widely from all this. The character of many of our most distinguished men will be handed down to posterity by his vivid pencil. The following capital anecdote is from the amusing pen of Dr. Waterhouse.

“‘He was travelling in England in a stage-coach, with some gentlemen, who were strangers to him, but all sociable, and full of spirits. After dinner they fell into conversation, in which Stuart, it seems, was conspicuous; for his conversation was at all times animated and various, (and not the less so after dinner,) upon any topic that came up, especially upon subjects that called forth nice discrimination, correct judgment, and rapid thought, apt phrases, ludicrous images, and Burke-like power of expressing them.

“‘After he had been blazing away in his dramatic manner, his companions were very desirous to know *who* and *what* he was, for whatever Doctor Franklin may have said a century ago of the *question-asking propensity* of his countrymen, I never noticed so much of that kind of travelling curiosity in New-England as in Britain. On the contrary, I am certain that we in the United States are remarkably free from that sort of travelling importunateness. To the round-about question, to find out his calling or profession, Mr. Stuart answered with a grave face, and serious tone, that he sometimes dressed gentlemen's and ladies' hair, (at that time the high craped pomatumed hair was all the fashion.) —‘You are a hair-dresser then?’ ‘What!’ said he, ‘do you take me for a

barber?' 'I beg your pardon, sir, but I inferred it from what you said. If I mistook you, may I take the liberty to ask what you are then?' 'Why I sometimes brush a gentleman's coat, or hat, and sometimes adjust a cravat.' 'O, you are a valet then, to some nobleman?' 'A valet! indeed, sir, I am not. I am not a servant;—to be sure I make coats and waistcoats for gentlemen.' 'Oh! you are a tailor!' 'Tailor! do I look like a tailor? I'll assure you, I never handled a goose, other than a roasted one.' By this time they were all in a roar. 'What the devil are you then?' said one. 'I'll tell you,' said Stuart. 'Be assured all I have said is literally true. I dress hair, brush hats and coats, adjust a cravat, and make coats, waistcoats, and breeches, and likewise boots and shoes *at your service.*' 'Oho! a boot and shoe-maker after all!' 'Guess again, gentlemen, I never handled boot or shoe but for my own feet and legs; yet all I have told you is true.' 'We may as well give up guessing.' After checking his laughter, and pumping up a fresh flow of spirits by a large pinch of snuff, he said to them very gravely, 'Now, gentlemen, I will not play the fool with you any longer, but will tell you, upon my honor as a gentleman, my *bona fide* profession. I get my bread by making faces.' He then screwed his countenance, and twisted the lineaments of his visage, in a manner such as Samuel Foote or Charles Matthews might have envied. When his companions, after loud peals of laughter, had composed themselves, each took credit to himself for having 'all the while suspected that the gentleman belonged to the theatre,' and they all knew that he must be a comedian by profession; when to their utter surprise, he assured them that he never was on the stage, and very rarely saw the inside of a play-house, or any similar place of amusement. They now all looked at each other with astonishment.

"Before parting, Stuart said to his companions, 'Gentlemen, you will find that all I have said of my various employments, is comprised in these few words: I am a portrait-painter. If you will call at John Palmer's, York-Buildings, London, where I shall be ready and willing to brush you a coat or hat, dress your hair, *à la mode*, supply you, if in need, with a wig of any fashion or dimensions, accommodate you with boots or shoes, give you ruffles or cravats, and make faces for you.'

"While taking a parting glass at the inn, they begged leave to inquire of their pleasant companion, in what part of England he was born; he told them he was not born in England, Wales, Ireland, or Scotland. Here was another puzzle for John Bull. 'Where then?' 'I was born at Narraganset.' 'Where's that?' 'Six miles from Pottawoone, and ten miles from Poppasquash, and about four miles west of Canonicut, and not far from the

spot where the famous battle with the warlike Pequots was fought.' 'In what part of the East Indies is that, sir?' 'East Indies, my dear sir! it is in the state of Rhode-Island, between Massachusetts and Connecticut river.' This was all Greek to his companions, and he left them to study a new lesson of geography, affording another instance of the ignorance of islanders, respecting men of genius, whose vernacular tongue is the same with that of Bacon, Newton, and Locke, Shakspeare, Milton, and Pope.' "

Stuart received much instruction from Mr. West, and became distinguished among the greatest portrait-painters of the British metropolis, where he passed many years of his life. With the proud feeling and high-wrought sensibilities of genius, he had many of its weaknesses. His disregard for the maxims of prudence often entangled him in pecuniary difficulties, and threw a shadow over the uprightness of his character, which never dims the lustre of dull minds, protected by the homely but important virtues of carefulness and economy. His life,—though beautiful forms could be summoned around him at will,—must have been a wretched scene, a "painted misery," harassed by petty annoyances, as unnecessary as they were vexatious. But we will

"No farther seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode;
There they alike in trembling hope repose,
The bosom of his Father and his God."

The twelfth chapter contains an interesting sketch of miniature painting, a beautiful branch of art, which has been cultivated with much success among us, and has at present many skilful practisers. The next three chapters Mr. Dunlap gives to his own biography. This will be read with eagerness, both on account of the varied incidents and scenes which he has been a witness of, or an actor in, and the perfect candor with which he delineates his own character in its shades as well as lights. The next chapter is taken up with names but little known to fame. The eighteenth chapter contains a sketch of the history of architecture, accompanied by much useful information on the technical terms of the art. This is followed by a full account of the life and works of Colonel Trumbull, in which many of his productions are highly praised; but we are sorry to say that portions of the narrative are uncandid, and unnecessarily severe. We cannot go into the battles of the artists; the space in Mr. Dunlap's book taken up by this unpleasant subject, is

worse than wasted. We leave it with the single remark, that we do not admire Colonel Trumbull as an artist, but that his industry and zeal entitle him to respect, if not to applause. His life is closely connected with the history of the American revolution, many scenes of which he has illustrated by his pencil, and his name will thus have a twofold claim on the notice of posterity. A short sketch of American academies of art, followed by shorter sketches of some obscure artists, closes the first volume.

The second volume embraces a period of greater brilliancy and higher improvement in American art; a period illustrated by the genius of Malbone, Vanderlyn, Jarvis, the Peales, and numberless others. But the works of Washington Allston will, of themselves, make this a splendid era in our history. As this gentleman is living among us, he is to be spoken of with reserve, except as an artist. What, then, are the leading traits of his genius? His works show a mind of vast compass, and varied culture. In literary attainments and poetic talent, he stands pre-eminent among his brethren. Early education, after studies, and wide intercourse with the most illustrious men of Europe, have made him familiar with every region of thought, from which a genius for art can draw its nourishment. He has carefully studied the great models of painting abroad,—in Italy and England,—and he has mastered the profoundest principles with the minutest details. His drawing is celebrated for truth, science, and accuracy. His coloring is rich, expressive, and of the most delicate finish. But above and beyond this, he has the proudest attribute of genius, the power of surrounding himself at will with the loveliest and sublimest creations. His imagination seems to dwell forever in a world of ideal beauty,—in the “kingdom of forms” which come and go, obedient to his nod. He can conjure up the most solemn scenes of Pity and Terror, or the mild and gracious images of Romance and Love. The awful Shade of Samuel speaks horror to the soul of the conscience-stricken king,—the figure of the Prophet of Israel, dictating to his Scribe, dilates with the inspiration of God,—and the richest and softest scene of Shakspeare, starting into mimic life on the canvas, makes the heart feel with a delicious enchantment,

“How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon the bank.”

No American has approached so near the great masters of past

ages, as Mr. Allston. His love for the art has bound him to it, heart and soul, and for life. The promptings of his exquisitely organized nature lead him onward and still onward in his high career. His works are among the most illustrious examples of the loftiest poetry of art. His hand and eye are obedient to the bidding of his calm intellect. May the world long profit by the presence of that serene spirit, whose pathway has always lain in the realms of truth, purity, and beauty; whose treasured thoughts have been poured out in every form of grace and sublimity; whose light is destined to shine, like some beneficent star, in the brightest constellation of American genius!

Mr. Dunlap has adorned his life of Allston with many extracts from the painter's letters. These are delicious pieces of poetry, anecdote, and criticism, and, what is better, they breathe the finest spirit of humanity. They show a heart as free from malice and envy as childhood itself. Such is the character of a great and good man. Let the irritable geniuses of the age learn of him, that the essence of wisdom is not concentrated in a sneer.

The life of Mr. Sully is full of interest. He will unquestionably hold a high rank in the history of American art. Of a later race, there are many distinguished names. Harding is successful and brilliant in portrait painting. Alexander excels in this, and may excel, if he chooses, in higher branches of art. His "Magdalen," though an unfinished study, is an uncommonly beautiful exhibition of pathos and power. It drew from Sir Walter Scott, when that great man was in Italy, the exclamation, "she is forgiven!" and has, from this circumstance, a melancholy interest. Inman is celebrated for the exquisite finish of his style of portraiture. Mr. S. F. B. Morse is in the prime of life, and the flower of strength. His fame is high and increasing. His exertions have been honorably devoted to a more systematic promotion of his favorite arts; and he has been called to preside over an institution which owes its origin mainly to his labors. He has lately finished a picture, representing the Gallery of the Louvre, with copies on a reduced scale, of many master works in that celebrated collection. This picture we have not yet had the pleasure of seeing; but report speaks of it in terms of high praise. The history of Mr. Cole is replete with touching interest. His success is the just reward of virtuous industry, and strong native

powers. His landscapes are finished and beautiful productions; and he bids fair to occupy an enviable niche in the temple of fame. Many other living painters, of high promise, are commemorated in this volume; but we are compelled to pass them by, together with numerous interesting notices of engravers and architects, for the sake of saying a few words on American sculpture.

In this noble art, two young Americans have risen to a conspicuous rank. Mr. Augur, now living in New Haven, is well known for several beautiful pieces executed by him under many disadvantages, but with signal success. His first original work, we believe, was a small statue of Sappho, which attracted considerable attention in Boston, and was bought by Mr. Thomas H. Perkins. This work has some serious imperfections. The expression of the impassioned poetess is more like that of a puritan girl of Cromwell's time; the figure is rather stiff, and the attitude ungraceful. But the touch of genius, though unripe and inexperienced, is upon it. There is a promise of better things, and the promise has been kept. The group of "Jeptha and his Daughter," followed. This is a higher and grander subject. The action belongs to the sphere of tragedy, and requires greater vigor of conception and profounder sentiment. The crisis chosen by the artist, is the moment when the chieftain recognizes his daughter. He is bound by a solemn vow to offer up to God the first one who comes forth to meet him, as he returns victorious from the battle field. The sudden agony of the father's heart, on seeing his only and beloved daughter rush to certain death,—to death by his own hand,—with triumphant song and dance, is conceived with wonderful force of imagination, and fully expressed in the looks and attitude of the warrior. The artist is equally successful in expressing the mingled concern, inquiry, and astonishment of the daughter, as she suddenly pauses, bends forward, and sees her father agitated by some strong but unaccountable emotion. In the execution of this group there are very decided proofs of much progress in the art, since the last. The drawing is correct, the draperies well managed, the attitudes easy and natural, and the chiselling is done with a free hand. We are not aware that Mr. Augur has exhibited anything since, but we hope to hear from him again, at his convenience; for we are sure that he is striding forward to high fame and honor in his beautiful art.

Horatio Greenough, now resident in Florence, has already gained a wide and well-deserved renown. A few years ago he left the halls of Harvard University, to visit the land of art, beauty, and song. He had already shewn a fine eye for form, and his imagination was teeming with creations, which his hand was destined, at a future day, to embody. He went abroad with the advantage of a thorough literary education, which he had wisely persevered in attaining. With a mind highly cultivated, and full of poetry, he sailed to Italy, and gave himself up, enthusiastically, wholly, to sculpture, surrounded by the gathered treasures of ancient and modern genius. He toiled on silently, patiently, fervently. There were moments, doubtless, of anxious thought and gloomy foreboding. But he lived in a world of beauty, against whose splendors he could not shut his eyes; and with the strong spirit of youth and ambition, he worked on, nor abated "one jot of heart or hope."

The first original work of Mr. Greenough, exhibited in this country, was the group of "Chanting Cherubs." The idea of this delightful group was taken from two figures in the *Madonna del Trono*, of Raphael. The work was executed for Mr. J. F. Cooper, by whom it was sent to the United States. It drew many visitors, and excited the strongest interest and admiration. The figures represent two infant spirits, or cherubs, about to begin a chant. The idea of sinless childhood, free from the sufferings of this world, in the act of praise and song to the new-born Saviour of man, is expressed in this group with remarkable sweetness, purity, and beauty. This work gave Mr. Greenough, at once, a high rank, in the opinion of his countrymen. Another work of great merit followed. The idea of the "Medora" is borrowed from the following lines of Lord Byron's *Corsair*:

" In life itself she was so still and fair,
That death, with gentle aspect, withered there;
And the cold flowers her colder hand contained,
In that last grasp as tenderly were strained,
As if she scarcely felt, but feigned a sleep,
And made it almost mockery yet to weep;
The long dark lashes fringed her lids of snow,
And veiled,—thought shrinks from all that lurked below.
Oh ! o'er the eye death most exerts his might,
And hurls the spirit from her throne of light ;

Sinks those blue orbs in that long last eclipse,
But spares, as yet, the charm around her lips,—
Yet, yet they seem as they forbore to smile,
And wished repose, but only for a while.
But the white shroud, and each extended tress,
Long, fair, but spread in utter lifelessness,
Which late the sport of every summer wind,
Escaped the baffled wind that strove to bind,—
These, and the pale pure cheek, became the bier.”

Medora lies in the stillness and beauty of recent death. The outlines and proportions of the figure belong to the most perfect form of female loveliness, while the placid, calm repose that overspreads her countenance, is exquisitely true to the poet's conception. The attitude, the position of the several limbs, and the resting of the drapery, are wrought out with minuteness of labor, carefulness of study, and delicacy of thought.

We have since been gratified with another specimen of Mr. Greenough's genius,—a group of two infants, the elder of whom is receiving the younger into Paradise. The figures are moulded after the fairest and fullest form of childhood. Their attitudes are marked by perfect grace and freedom, on whichever side they are viewed. The younger spirit is gazing into the face of his guide with an expression of infantile confidence and earnest inquiry. *Quæ nunc abitis in loca?* is the question bursting from his amazed and happy heart. The elder exhibits a beautiful blending of child-like loveliness with the expanded intellect of a spiritual being. The lines of the lower part of his face are those of humanity; but the broad and beautiful forehead speaks the higher intelligence of another state. A spirit sits enthroned upon it, not of this world.

Mr. Greenough is understood to be engaged at present on the statue of Washington, for which he has lately received a commission from the government of the United States. This, though a splendid distinction for so young a man, is fully merited by his genius and industry. The two greatest sculptors of this age,—Chantrey and Canova,—have tried their hands upon this, the sublimest subject of mere human history; but it is thought with no very eminent success. Mr. Greenough will have one advantage in the execution of his work over both his illustrious predecessors,—the enthusiasm of an American heart for the Founder of American Liberty.

Mr. Greenough has shown many of the highest qualities of genius. He has shown a high creative genius, set off by the graces of refined taste. His industry is unwavering, his perseverance unbroken. He has a correct eye for form, a skilful hand for drawing, and superadds to the other excellencies of his works, the higher excellence of soul and sentiment. With such gifts of genius,—with an accomplished education,—with the untrammeled freedom of an American spirit, Mr. Greenough's prospects are more flattering to his ambition than those of any artist who has sprung up among us.

What, then, is the state of American art? We have had an abundance of earnest devotees, as Mr. Dunlap's book bears ample testimony. That we have had many artists of exalted genius, the collections of this country and Europe fully prove. Allston, Stuart, and his accomplished nephew, Stuart Newton, with many others, have been equally distinguished at home and abroad. The elder teachers of American artists have passed or are passing away; but a new generation is coming forward, to dispute the palm, perhaps to win the victory. The galleries of Europe are annually thronged with pilgrims from the new world, to the tombs of departed genius in the old. We have academies which have done something, and promise to do more, for the arts. We have yearly exhibitions of all the good pictures to be had, in all the principal cities of the Union. We have other exhibitions, from time to time, of great works which find their way from Europe to our shores. The Boston Athenæum has, in its possession, the invaluable paintings of Rome, by Panini. We have had among us copies of many celebrated pictures and statues of Italy. We have had the original comic group of Mr. Thom, from Burns's *Tam O'Shanter*,—and very lately, the model of a group, executed by an artist of New York, representing Uncle Toby and the Widow Wadman. Artists are regarded among us with esteem, nay, with reverence. Their works are examined, criticised, praised,—both with and without knowledge,—and, what is better, they are bought.

But it must be confessed, that a large proportion of the works of our artists, like a majority of our literary productions, are of an ephemeral character. Landscapes and fancy-pieces are produced in quantities to suit, like stanzas to young ladies, and verses in albums. Our artists are not willing enough to give long years to strict mental toil,—to a laborious study of the

principles which lie at the foundation of all art,—to an unceasing practice of the elementary studies, on which all accuracy depends,—and to the unfolding of the imagination and taste, by careful literary culture. Still we think, after the works of temporary interest have vanished from the face of the earth, there will be left many enduring memorials, on which genius, labor, and high poetry, are visibly stamped. It may be that an era of art is approaching, in which the graceful refinement, the elaborate finish, the delicate taste, fostered by the venerable institutions of Europe, shall be made to adorn the spirit of our republic, and the typified sentiment of American freedom.

ART. VIII.—*Slavery.*

An Appeal in Favor of that Class of Americans called Africans. By Mrs. CHILD, Author of the Mother's Book, &c., &c. Boston. 1831.

WE have placed the above title of a book by Mrs. Child, at the head of this article in order to express our regret that a writer capable of being so agreeable, and at the same time so useful, should have departed from that line of authorship in which she has justly acquired a high reputation. Our principal object in the article is to offer to our readers a brief and rapid outline of the state of slavery at different periods in the history of the world; and, in that way, to correct impressions upon the subject which are, we believe, in many cases, erroneous and ill-founded. We have been the more strongly induced to do this, from the high state of excitement which exists in England and our own country upon the subject, and which has been fomented by the press, by associations, and the various other modes of operating upon the public mind, that distinguish in so remarkable a manner the history of the present age.

It is not indeed surprising, that the subject of involuntary servitude should excite a deep interest in the public mind. While so many institutions for benevolent purposes are at work, and unparalleled efforts are making to enlighten, educate, and elevate mankind, it is hardly to be conceived that a